

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PANAMA 06011 222140Z
ACTION ARA-14

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R 222024Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA
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USCINCSO

UNCLAS PANAMA 6011

DEPT FOR ARA/PAF AND PAN

USCINCSO FOR J-2 AND PAO

PANCANAL FOR IO

FOLLOWING IS USIS/PANAMA'S P R 222022Z AUG 77 SENT ACTION
USINFO WASHDC INFO SECSTATE REPEATED TO YOU:

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SECSTATE FOR ARA/PAF & PAN

E.O. 11652: N/A

MEDIA REACTION

1-PANAMA CITY.--CANAL TREATY: WEEKEND COVERAGE OF TREATY
DEVELOPMENTS WAS HEAVY. ALL MORNINGS AUG. 22 FRONT-PAGE
WIRE SERVICE REPORTS OF MEET THE PRESS APPEARANCE BY SENS.
THURMOND AND HELMS. PRO-GOP CRITICA HEADS STORY, "CAMPAIGN
AGAINST TREATY GAINS STRENGTH." PRO-GOP MATUTINO HEADS SAME
EFE ARTICLE, "ACCORDING TO THURMOND AND HELMS, MILITARY MEN
WILL RUIN THEIR CAREERS IF THEY OPPOSE PRES. JIMMY CARTER."
SEMI-INDEPENDENT LA ESTRELLA HEADS AP WASHINGTON STORY,
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"OBSTRUCTIONIST ACTION PREPARED IN SENATE TO AVOID TREATY
RATIFICATION," WHILE STAR AND HERALD HEADS SAME STORY,
"HELMS, THURMOND VOW SENATE DRIVE AGAINST TREATY OK."

2-CRITICA FRONT PAGES ARTICLE ON "TRUE STORY OF SEN. THURMOND,"
ACCUSING HIM OF TALKING TO NO ONE IN FAVOR OF TREATY DURING HIS
24-HOUR VISIT TO PANAMA LAST WEEK. ARTICLE ALSO SAYS THURMOND

"IS CONSIDERED ENEMY NUMBER ONE OF UNIONS...KNOWN RACIST...
ULTRA CONSERVATIVE...AND HAS STRONG TIES WITH SOME OF BLOODIEST
DICTATORSHIPS IN WORLD."

3-THURMOND, HELMS, HATCH VISIT TO PANAMA HEAVILY COVERED IN AUG.
19 AND 20 PRESS, ESPECIALLY "PRESS CONFERENCE" THEY GAVE AT PAN-
CANAL ADMIN BUILDING AFTERNOON OF AUG. 19, WHICH CONSISTED OF
SHORT STATEMENTS BY EACH OF THREE SENATORS, WITH NO QUESTIONS
ALLOWED. PRESS DISATISFACTION WITH SESSION MANIFESTED IN AUG. 20
STORIES, HEADED, "US SENATOR ACTS LIKE PATTON," IN CRITICA AND
"THE THREE SPOKE FOR FIVE MINUTES AND CAUSED PROTEST BY PRESS,"
IN MATUTINO. AUG. 21 DOMINICAL HEADS STORY, "FOLKLORIC AND
FRUITLISS PRESS CONFERENCE." AUG. 20 CRITICA CARRIES BACK-PAGE
PHOTO OF AP STRINGER MAKING OBSCENE GESTURE TO
SENATORS AS THEY DEPARTED CONFERENCE. CRITICA'S PAGE ONE STORY
QUOTES PROMINENT PANAMANIAN JOURNALIST AS SAYING THURMOND
"RESEMBLES HITLER." AUG. 21 INSIDE PAGE DOMINICAL STORY HEADED
"THURMOND SHAMES (US) BY HIS BACKWARD ATTITUDE."

4-MATUTINO COLUMNIST LVUIS RESTREPO AUG. 22 CALLS THURMOND
"GOOD EXAMPLE OF PEOPLE FROM SOUTH OF HIS COUNTRY: POMPOUS,
RACIST, CONSIDERING THEMSELVES TO BE SENT BY THE CELESTIAL
DIVINITY TO BE LORDS AND MASTERS OF ENTIRE WORLD." RESTREPO
COMPARES THIS WITH ZONE RESIDENTS WHO ARE QUOTED IN INTERVIEWS
AS SAYING THEY WILL DESTROY WHAT THEY HAVE RATHER THAN GIVE IT
TO PANAMANIAN. RESTREPO SAYS WHEN THESE PEOPLE RETURN TO US,
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THEY WILL HAVE TO FACE SAME PROBLEMS AS OTHER US CITIZENS. "THEY
COULD STAY HERE AND CO-EXIST WITH PANAMANIAN, WHO DO NOT HATE
THEM....BUT...THIS WOULD BE TO ADMIT THAT WE ARE HUMAN BEINGS LIKE
THEM..."

5-CRITICA EDIT AUG. 22 ALSO CRITICIZES THURMOND AND HIS REMARKS
THAT HE WOULD BE WILLING TO INCREASE COMPENSATION FOR CANAL TO
PANAMA. "WE HAVE HERE A TYPICAL CASE OF HOW THEY ARE REVIVING
ANACHROAISTIC DOLLAR DIPLOMACY WITH WHICH US REACTIONISM HOPES TO
CONTINUE DOMINATING OUR PEOPLE." CRITICA ADMITS BATTLE FOR
RATIFICATION WILL BE HARD, BUT "WE BELIEVE THAT PRESIDENT OF US,
BACKED BY PENTAGON AND BY KISSINGER, FORD AND OTHER PROMINENT
FIGURES OF REPUBLICAN PARTY, CAN BREAK THIS OPPOSITION TO TREATY..."

6-ALL MEDIA AUG. 20 AND 21 DEVOTED FRONT PAGES AND EDITS TO AUG. 19
BRIEFING OF 505 MEMBERS OF REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY BY TORRIJOS
AND MEMBERS OF NEGOTIATING TEAM. MATUTINO AUG. 20 FRONT PAGE
CARRIED TEXTS OF REMARKS BY TORRIJOS AND OTHERS. CRITICA CARRIES
FIVE INSIDE PAGES OF ARTICLES ON MEETING. CRITICA, MATUTINO,
ESTRELLA AND DOMINICAL DEVOTED EDITS AND COMMENTARIES TO
PRAISING MEETING.

7-DOMINICAL AUG. 21 SAYS TORRIJOS' MESSAGE TO NATION WAS GIVEN WITH "SIMPLE SOLEMNITY. WITH CLARITY AND RESPONSIBILITY THAT THE OCCASION CALLED FOR...," DEALING WITH AGREEMENT THAT IS NOT JUST A WAY OUT BUT THE ONE LONGED FOR BY GENERATIONS. DOMINICAL CONCLUDES, "MESSAGE OF CHIEF OF GOVERNMENT WAS ENGRAVED ON NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS, ASKING THAT (THE PEOPLE) FORM OPINIONS, DISSENT AND TAKE ISSUE, BUT THAT ALL THIS BE DONE WITH RESPONSIBILITY OF WHAT HE CALLED 'HISTORICAL RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL PANAMANIAN'S'."

8-CRITICA CALLS MEETING "GLORIOUS DAY," AND WARNS ENEMIES OF TREATY THAT MAJORITY OF PANAMANIAN PEOPLE WILL SUPPORT TREATY IN PLEBISCITE. ESTRELLA AUG. 22 EDIT PRAISES PERFORMANCE OF ALL NEGOTIATORS AT BRIEFING SESSION, UNCLASSIFIED

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AND CONCLUDES, "THAT ACHIEVED BY OUR NEGOTIATORS, LED AT ALL TIMES BY GEN. TORRIJOS, CAN BE CALLED EXTRAORDINARY, CONSTITUTING A RESOUNDING TRIUMPH FOR THE GOVERNMENT, AND ABOVE ALL, FOR THE NATION."

9-ESTRELLA AUG. 21 EDIT MAINTAINS THAT US OPPOSITION TO TREATY IS DUE LESS TO US IMPERIALIST LEANINGS THAN TO MISTAKEN BELIEF THAT US PURCHASED CANAL ZONE. "WE BELIEVE THAT AS SOON AS TRUTHS, SO SIMPLE AND ELEMENTARY, ARE DULY KNOWN AND UNDERSTOOD BY THE MANY AMERICANS WHO BELIEVE OTHERWISE, A WIDE GAP WILL BE OVERCOME TOWARD CLEARING AWAY CLOUDS OF MISUNDERSTANDING FROM THE ROAD... FURTHERMORE, IT IS HARD TO BELIEVE THAT US SENATE WOULD BE CAPABLE OF REFUSING OPPORTUNITY TO RATIFY NEW TREATY WHEN PRES. CARTER HAS COME OUT SO FIRMLY IN FAVOR OF IT..."

10-MATUTINO AUG. 22 EDIT SAYS THAT EACH PANAMANIAN MUST VOTE HIS CONSCIENCE IN TREATY PLEBISCITE, BUT SHOULD BE AWARE THAT A "NO" VOTE INDICATES "AGREEMENT WITH CURRENT SITUATION...NO WOULD SIGNIFY NOT TAKING ADVANTAGE OF MAGNIFICENT OPPORTUNITY... NO WOULD SIGNIFY LOSING MORAL SUPPORT WHICH WORLD GIVE US." YES VOTE ON OTHER HAND WOULD BE "TO LIBERATE OURSELVES IMMEDIATELY FROM SEAL OF PERPETUITY...YES VOTE WOULD SIGNIFY MODIFYING DICTIONARIES AND MAPS OF WORLD...YES VOTE WOULD ACHIEVE ALMOST EVERYTHING. AND WE WOULD BE WAITING FOR A MOMENT OF PERPETUITY, TO ERASE THE 'ALMOST'." ITEM

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